#### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 5A Toll Relief SPONSOR(S): Busatta Cabrera

TIED BILLS: IDEN./SIM. BILLS: SB 6-A

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Appropriations Committee		Davis	Pridgeon

### **SUMMARY ANALYSIS**

The bill directs the Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) to establish a toll relief program effective January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, for all Florida toll facilities or Florida toll facility entities that use a Florida-issued transponder or are interoperable with the Department of Transportation's (DOT) prepaid electronic transponder toll system.

Under the program, a person must have a "qualifying account", meaning a private prepaid SunPass account or another Florida-based electronic prepaid toll program account in good standing, and a SunPass or other transponder issued by a Florida toll entity must be linked to the qualifying account. A qualifying account that records 35 or more "qualifying transactions" per transponder per calendar month is eligible for an account credit equal to 50 percent of the amount paid in that calendar month for the qualifying transactions per transponder. A "qualifying transaction" is a paid transponder-based toll transaction incurred by a two-axle vehicle for travel on a Florida toll facility using a Florida issued transponder linked to a qualifying account. The account credit must be posted to the qualifying account the month after the credit is earned.

The bill appropriates, for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the nonrecurring sum of \$500 million from the General Revenue Fund to the State Transportation Trust Fund for the purpose of reimbursing the DOT, the FTE, and other Florida toll facilities or Florida toll facility entities for account credits issued for promotional purposes authorized in s. 338.161(1), F.S., and under the toll relief program created by the bill. The DOT must provide reimbursements to support compliance with covenants made with bondholders.

The bill prohibits the DOT's use of appropriated funds for specified purposes, requires reporting to the DOT by the Florida toll facility or Florida toll facility entities seeking reimbursement for account credits issued, and requires reporting by the DOT to the Governor and chairs of the legislative appropriations committees.

The bill also requires the DOT to transfer to the General Revenue Fund all interest earnings from the appropriated funds. The unexpended balance of funds appropriated to the DOT for toll relief as of June 30, 2023, must revert and is appropriated to the DOT for the same purpose for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Any unexpended balance of funds as of February 29, 2024, must immediately revert to the General Revenue Fund.

The bill provides that the act is effective upon becoming a law and that it expires on February 29, 2024.

This document does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill sponsor or House of Representatives. STORAGE NAME: h0005A.APC

#### **FULL ANALYSIS**

#### I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

#### A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

## **Current Situation**

Under Florida law, with limited exceptions, a person using a toll facility must pay the required toll. <sup>1</sup> Toll revenues are used to pay the cost of building the transportation facility, <sup>2</sup> usually through the paying off of bond debt, and tolls may continue to be collected and increased even after the discharge of any bond debt. <sup>3</sup> All tolls collected must first be used to operate, maintain, and improve the toll facility before such tolls may be used for other specified transportation related purposes. <sup>4</sup>

Florida's toll facilities are owned and operated by a variety of entities including the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT), the Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE), expressway authorities, local governments, and private entities.

# **DOT and FTE Toll Facilities**

The DOT may establish a toll to fully or partially pay for *new* limited access facilities on the State Highway System, <sup>5</sup> lanes added to existing limited access facilities on the State Highway System, new major bridges on the State Highway System over waterways, and replacements for existing major bridges on the State Highway System over waterways. <sup>6</sup> Except for high-occupancy vehicle lanes, express lanes, the turnpike system, and as otherwise authorized by law, DOT may not establish tolls on lanes of limited access facilities that exist on July 1, 2012, unless tolls were in effect for the lanes prior to July 1, 2012.<sup>7</sup>

DOT-owned toll facilities include Alligator Alley, the Sunshine Skyway Bridge, portions of the Wekiva Parkway,<sup>8</sup> the Garcon Point Bridge,<sup>9</sup> the Pinellas Bayway Bridge, and the following express facilities: 95 Express, 75 Express, Palmetto Express, 595 Express, I-4 Express,<sup>10</sup> and 295 Express.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. 338.155(1), F.S. The following are exceptions to the requirement to pay tolls: an employee of the agency operating the toll project when using the toll facility on official state business; state military personnel while on official military business; specified persons with a disability; a person exempt from toll payment by the authorizing resolution for bonds issued to finance the facility; a person exempt on a temporary basis where use of such toll facility is required as a detour route; a law enforcement officer operating an official vehicle while on official law enforcement business; a person operating a fire vehicle while on official business or a rescue vehicle while on official business; a person participating in the funeral procession of a law enforcement officer or firefighter killed in the line of duty. S. 338.155(1)(a), F.S. Additionally, the secretary of the DOT may suspend the payment of tolls when necessary to assist in emergency evacuation. S. 338.155(1)(b), F.S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Section 334.03(30), F.S., defines the term "transportation facility" to mean "any means for the transportation of people or property from place to place which is constructed, operated, or maintained in whole or in part from public funds. The term includes the property or property rights, both real and personal, which have been or may be established by public bodies for the transportation of people or property from place to place."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> S. 338.165(1), F.S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> S. 338.165(1), (2), and (5), F.S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Section 334.03(24), F.S., defines the term "State Highway System" to mean "the interstate system and all other roads within the state which were under the jurisdiction of the state on June 10, 1995, and roads constructed by an agency of the state for the State Highway System, plus roads transferred to the state's jurisdiction after that date by mutual consent with another governmental entity, but not including roads so transferred from the state's jurisdiction. These facilities shall be facilities to which access is regulated."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> S. 338.151. F.S.

<sup>7</sup> Id

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The Wekiva Parkway is under joint management of DOT and the Central Florida Expressway Authority.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Until June 2022, the Garcon Point Bridge was owned by the Santa Rosa Bay Bridge Authority.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Opened on February 26, 2022.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Florida Transportation Commission, *Transportation Authority Monitoring and Oversight Report: Toll Authority* (Fiscal Year 2021); I-4 Express, *About*, <a href="https://idexpress.com/about/">https://idexpress.com/about/</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

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The FTE<sup>12</sup> is a unit within DOT that operates and maintains Florida's Turnpike System, including Florida's Turnpike (including the Homestead Extension), the First Coast Expressway, Seminole Expressway, Beachline West Expressway, Beachline East Expressway, Southern Connector Extension, Sawgrass Expressway, Polk Parkway, I-4 Connector, Veterans Expressway, Daniel Webster Western Beltway, and the Suncoast Parkway. 13 The FTE is also responsible for management of DOT-owned toll facilities.14

# Expressway and Bridge Authority Toll Facilities

Various expressway and bridge authorities in Florida also own and operate toll facilities. For example:

- The Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) owns and operates a number of toll facilities on portions of various state roads (S.R.) in Central Florida: East-West Expressway (S.R. 408), Beachline Expressway (S.R. 528), Central Florida GreeneWay (S.R. 417), Western Beltway (S.R. 429), John Land Apopka Expressway (S.R. 414), S.R. 451, and S.R. 453. 15
- The Miami-Dade County Expressway Authority (MDX) facilities include the Airport Expressway (S.R. 112), Dolphin Expressway (S.R. 836), Don Shula Expressway (S.R. 874), Snapper Creek Expressway (S.R. 878), and Gratigny Parkway (S.R. 924). 16
- The Mid-Bay Bridge Authority is designated as S.R. 293 and comprises the Mid-Bay Bridge. Danny Wuerffel Way, and Walter Francis Spence Parkway.<sup>17</sup> The FTE provides toll operations on these facilities, and the DOT's District Three provides maintenance functions. 18
- The Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority (THEA) owns, maintains, and operates four facilities within Hillsborough County: the Selmon Expressway (SR 618), the Brandon Parkway, Meridian Avenue, and the Selmon Greenway. 19

# Local Government and Private Entity Toll Facilities

Toll facilities are also owned by local governments or locally-created authorities. For example, the Monroe County Card Sound Toll Authority is primarily responsible for operating the Card Sound Bridge. The DOT provides maintenance for the toll booth and right-of-way along Card Sound Road.<sup>20</sup> At least one toll facility is privately owned, the Orchard Pond Parkway.<sup>21</sup>

## Toll Rate Increases

Under Florida law, DOT, including the FTE, must, no more frequently than once a year and no less frequently than once every five years, index its toll rates on existing toll facilities to inflation. Toll rates may be increased beyond inflation as directed by bond covenants, governing body authorization, or pursuant to DOT rule.<sup>22</sup> These toll rate adjustments are exempt from the rule ratification requirements in the Administrative Procedure Act. 23 24

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> The Florida Turnpike Enterprise law is codified in ss. 338.22-338.241, F.S.

<sup>13</sup> See Florida's Turnpike System Maps, https://floridasturnpike.com/system-maps/ for a map of the Florida's turnpike system. (last visited Dec. 9, 2022.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Florida Transportation Commission, Transportation Authority Monitoring and Oversight Report: Toll Authority (Fiscal Year 2021) at 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> *Id*. at 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> MDX, About Miami-Dade Expressway Authority, https://mdxway.com/about/mdx (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Florida Transportation Commission, Transportation Authority Monitoring and Oversight Report: Toll Authority (Fiscal Year 2021) at 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> *Id.* at 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Tampa Hillsborough Expressway Authority, About Us, https://www.tampa-xway.com/about-the-authority/ (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Monroe County, Card Sound Toll Authority, <a href="https://www.monroecounty-fl.gov/100/Card-Sound-Toll-Authority">https://www.monroecounty-fl.gov/100/Card-Sound-Toll-Authority</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Orchard Pond Parkway, About, https://www.monroecounty-fl.gov/100/Card-Sound-Toll-Authority (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> S. 338.165(3)(a). F.S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> S. 120.80(18), F.S. The Administrative Procedure Act is codified in ch. 120, F.S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> DOT's Toll Facilities and Toll Rate Schedule is codified in r. 14-15.0081, F.A.C. DOT's toll-rate schedule effective February 2, 2022 is available at https://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-14026 (last visited Dec. 9, 2022). STORAGE NAME: h0005A.APC PAGE: 3

In 2022, the Legislature prohibited the DOT from making toll rate adjustments for inflation during the 2022-2023 fiscal year.<sup>25</sup>

### SunPass

Florida's electronic prepaid toll program, SunPass, is the DOT's preferred method of payment for tolls. <sup>26</sup> Customers may purchase a transponder at a variety of locations, <sup>27</sup> activate it for use, and install it in the customer's vehicle. When the vehicle encounters a toll collection point, the SunPass collection system electronically recognizes the transponder and automatically deducts the given toll amount from the customer's pre-paid account. Customers may pre-pay and replenish their SunPass accounts using credit or debit cards or cash. SunPass may be used on most Florida toll facilities and is interoperable with tolling systems in some other states, including Georgia, North Carolina, and states using E-Z Pass. <sup>28</sup> SunPass customers always pay the lowest toll amount in Florida, saving an average of 25 percent compared to paying cash or paying by the TOLL-BY-PLATE system, which bills a customer for tolls incurred over a 30-day period and imposes an additional \$2.50 administrative charge. <sup>29</sup>

# Toll Collection Interoperability

Interoperable toll collection allows drivers to establish a single toll account that allows for payments on a variety of tolled facilities, *regardless of the facility's ownership*. An interoperable system recognizes a customer at any given toll collection facility participating in the system, and each toll facility owner or operator receives proper payment for use of the owner's or operator's facility.

Current Florida law requires all new limited access facilities and existing transportation facilities on which new or replacement electronic toll collection systems are installed to be interoperable with the DOT's electronic toll-collection system.<sup>30</sup> The DOT may require the use of a transponder interoperable with the DOT's electronic toll collection system for use of high-occupancy toll lanes or express lanes.<sup>31</sup> The FTE may require the use of an electronic transponder interoperable with the DOT's electronic toll collection system for the use of express lanes on the turnpike system.<sup>32</sup>

Participating SunPass agencies, in addition to the DOT and the FTE, include the Miami-Dade County Expressway Authority, the Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority, the Central Florida Expressway Authority, the E-ZPass Group (an association of toll entities in 19 states),<sup>33</sup> the North Carolina

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> S. 338.165(3)(b), F.S.; Ch. 2022-157, Laws of Fla. This provision was contained in the implementing bill to the General Appropriations Act.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Florida's Turnpike, SUNPASS, https://floridasturnpike.com/tolls/sunpass/ (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Such as Publix, CVS Pharmacy, and Walgreens; Walk-in Centers; the SunPass Customer Service Center, or online at SunPass.com. The most commonly used transponders are the SunPass Mini and the SunPass PRO. For a comparison of the two transponders, see Florida's Turnpike, *SUNPASS*, <a href="https://floridasturnpike.com/tolls/sunpass/">https://floridasturnpike.com/tolls/sunpass/</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> *Id.* States that use E-Z Pass, include, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, North Carolina, Florida, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. See E-Z Pass, *Where Can I Use It?* <a href="https://www.e-zpassiag.com/about-e-zpass/where-can-i-use-it">https://www.e-zpassiag.com/about-e-zpass/where-can-i-use-it</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Florida's Turnpike, *SUNPASS*, <a href="https://floridasturnpike.com/tolls/sunpass/">https://floridasturnpike.com/tolls/sunpass/</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022); SunPass, Frequently Asked Questions,

https://www.sunpass.com/en/support/faq.shtml#:~:text=By%20becoming%20a%20SunPass%20customer%2C%20you%20will%20always,How%20does%20the%20SunPass%20Prepaid%20Toll%20Program%20work%3F (last visited Dec. 9, 2022); Florida's Turnpike, *TOLL-BY-PLATE*, <a href="https://floridasturnpike.com/tolls/toll-by-plate/">https://floridasturnpike.com/tolls/toll-by-plate/</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022). 30 S. 338.01(7), F.S. Note that express lanes in Florida are tolled lanes located within a non-tolled facility, such as I-75.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> S. 338.166(4), F.S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> S. 338.2216(1)(d), F.S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> The group is a partnership between the FTE and the E-ZPass network. The SunPass PRO can be used everywhere E-ZPass is accepted, and E-ZPass can be used to pay tolls incurred on Florida's Turnpike System and on toll facilities owned and operated by the DOT. The 19 states include Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode STORAGE NAME: h0005A.APC

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QuickPass, and the Georgia Peach Pass. Additional participants include other tolled facilities in Florida: Lee County (LeeWay), the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority (the Mid-Bay Bridge), Escambia County (Bob Sikes Bridge), Bay Harbor Islands (Broad Causeway), Miami-Dade County (the Venetian Causeway and the Rickenbacker Causeway), and the Card Sound Toll Authority (Monroe County, Card Sound Bridge).<sup>34</sup>

# Existing Toll Discounts and Rebates

Current law authorizes the DOT to incur expenses for paid advertising, marketing, and promotion of toll facilities and electronic toll collection products and services.<sup>35</sup> Such promotions may include discounts and free products.<sup>36</sup>

As authorized, SunPass offers a number of discount and rebate plans for frequent users and commuters on certain toll facilities on which SunPass may be used.<sup>37</sup> These plans may have requirements for residency,<sup>38</sup> vehicle occupancy, number-of-trips, or time-of-day restrictions.<sup>39</sup> For example, SunPass customers who use the Sunshine Skyway receive a 10 percent rebate for three-plus axle vehicles when 40 or more paid transactions per transponder occur for a given calendar month.<sup>40</sup> SunPass customers using the Pinellas Bayway may purchase an annual resident pass for \$15 and an annual commuter pass for \$50.<sup>41</sup>

# 2022 SunPass Savings Program

On August 25, 2022, Governor Ron DeSantis announced "SunPass Savings", a new toll discount program for customers who use Florida's Turnpike System and other DOT-owned toll facilities. <sup>42</sup> The program began on September 1, 2022, and is currently scheduled to run for six months. <sup>43</sup> Customers with two-axle vehicles receive a 20 percent credit to their SunPass account if they incur at least 40 paid toll transactions in a month or a 25 percent credit if they incur at least 80 paid toll transactions in a month. <sup>44</sup> Customers must have a SunPass account or Florida interoperable account <sup>45</sup> in good standing. <sup>46</sup> Credits are automatically posted to accounts on the 10th day of the following month. <sup>47</sup>

Island, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. See Florida's Turnpike, Interoperability in 19 States, <a href="https://floridasturnpike.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Interoperability-Map-07-21.pdf">https://floridasturnpike.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Interoperability-Map-07-21.pdf</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022). 34 SunPass, Tolls in Florida, Participating Agencies, <a href="https://www.sunpass.com/en/tolls/tollsSunPass.shtml">https://www.sunpass.com/en/tolls/tollsSunPass.shtml</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022). According to the SunPass website, in addition to SunPass transponders, the following transponders may be used in Florida: E-Pass (the Central Florida Expressway Authority), E-ZPass (the 19-state association), the LeeWay, the North Carolina QuickPass, and the Georgia Peach Pass. Id., Florida's Toll Roads and Bridges. Additionally, according to the Central Florida Expressway Authority website, the "Uni," (a product of the Central Florida Expressway Authority) is accepted everywhere E-Pass and E-Z Pass are accepted including 19 states from Florida to Maine and west to Minnesota." See cfxway, Uni by E-pass, <a href="https://www.cfxway.com/uni/">https://www.cfxway.com/uni/</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

35 S. 338.161(1), F.S.

- <sup>36</sup> *Id*.
- <sup>37</sup> For a listing, by county, of current SunPass discounts and rebates, see SunPass, *Tolls in Florida*, SunPass Discounts and Rebates, https://www.sunpass.com/en/tolls/tollsSunPass.shtml (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).
- <sup>38</sup> However, Florida residency is not required for participation in the SunPass system.
- <sup>39</sup> SunPass, *Tolls in Florida*, SunPass Discounts and Rebates, <a href="https://www.sunpass.com/en/tolls/tollsSunPass.shtml">https://www.sunpass.com/en/tolls/tollsSunPass.shtml</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).
- <sup>40</sup> *Id*.
- <sup>41</sup> *Id*.
- <sup>42</sup> Governor Ron DeSantis Press Release, *Governor Ron DeSantis Announces SunPass Savings*, August 25, 2022, <a href="https://www.flgov.com/2022/08/25/governor-ron-desantis-announces-sunpass-savings/">https://www.flgov.com/2022/08/25/governor-ron-desantis-announces-sunpass-savings/</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022). The following Florida toll facilities are included in this SunPass Savings program: Turnpike Mainline (SR 91 / SR 821), Sawgrass Expressway, (SR 869), Alligator Alley, Polk Parkway (SR 570), Sunshine Skyway Bridge, I-4 Connector, Veterans Expressway (SR 589), Suncoast Parkway (SR 589), Beachline East (SR 528) MP 0-8, Beachline West (SR 528) MP 31-46, Western Beltway (SR 429) MP 0-11, Southern Connector Extension (SR 417) MP 0-3, Seminole Expressway (SR 417) MP 38-55 A/B, Wekiva Parkway (SR 429) Mount Plymouth Rd to SR 46, First Coast Expressway (SR 23), Garcon Point Bridge, Pinellas Bayway, and express lanes. SunPass, SunPass Savings,

https://www.sunpass.com/en/common/docs/SunPass Savings Alert.pdf (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

<sup>43</sup> Governor Ron DeSantis Press Release, *Governor Ron DeSantis Announces SunPass Savings*, August 25, 2022, <a href="https://www.flgov.com/2022/08/25/governor-ron-desantis-announces-sunpass-savings/">https://www.flgov.com/2022/08/25/governor-ron-desantis-announces-sunpass-savings/</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

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#### Effect of the Bill

# Toll Relief Program

The bill directs the FTE to establish a toll relief program effective January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, for all Florida toll facilities or Florida toll facility entities that use a Florida-issued transponder or are interoperable with the DOT's prepaid electronic transponder toll system.

Under the program, a person must have a "qualifying account", meaning a private prepaid SunPass account or another Florida-based electronic prepaid toll program account in good standing, and a SunPass or other transponder issued by a Florida toll entity must be linked to the qualifying account. A qualifying account that records 35 or more "qualifying transactions" per transponder per calendar month is eligible for an account credit equal to 50 percent of the amount paid in that calendar month for the qualifying transactions per transponder. A "qualifying transaction" is a paid transponder-based toll transaction incurred by a two-axle vehicle for travel on a Florida toll facility using a Florida issued transponder linked to a qualifying account. The account credit must be posted to the qualifying account the month after the credit is earned.

# **Appropriation**

The bill appropriates, for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the nonrecurring sum of \$500 million from the General Revenue Fund to DOT's State Transportation Trust Fund for the purpose of reimbursing the DOT, the FTE, and other Florida toll facilities or Florida toll facility entities for account credits issued for promotional purposes authorized in s. 338.161(1), F.S., and under the toll relief program created by the bill. The DOT must provide reimbursements to support compliance with covenants made with the bondholders of the DOT, the FTE, or other Florida toll facility entities which are in the trust indentures or resolutions adopted in connection with the issuance of such bonds.

The DOT may not use appropriated funds for administration, contracted services, or expenses of the DOT, the FTE, a Florida toll facility or Florida toll facility entity, or any contractor or vendor thereof. The DOT may reimburse each Florida toll facility or Florida toll facility entities, as applicable, from appropriated funds for the amount of actual account credits issued, based upon auditable reports prepared by the Florida toll facility or Florida toll facility entities which aggregate the account credits issued. The reports must include any documentation required by the DOT to provide the DOT with sufficient information for reimbursement of account credits issued.

The DOT must submit quarterly reports to the Governor and the chairs of the legislative appropriations committees documenting reimbursements issued under this program to the DOT, the FTE, and other Florida toll facilities and Florida toll facility entities. The DOT's report must include supporting documentation with auditable data to support the account credits issued. By the end of the month following each quarter, the DOT must reconcile all disbursements and transfers for reimbursement, must transfer to the General Revenue Fund all interest earnings from the appropriated funds, and must provide a report of reconciliation to the Governor and the chairs of the legislative appropriations committees.

The unexpended balance of funds appropriated to the DOT for toll relief as of June 30, 2023, must revert and is appropriated to the DOT for the same purpose for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Any unexpended balance of funds as of February 29, 2024, must immediately revert to the General Revenue Fund.

Effective Date and Expiration of the Act

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Florida interoperable transponders are E-Pass, Uni, and Leeway. SunPass, *SunPass Savings*, <a href="https://www.sunpass.com/en/common/docs/SunPass Savings Alert.pdf">https://www.sunpass.com/en/common/docs/SunPass Savings Alert.pdf</a> (last visited Dec. 9, 2022).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> *Id*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> *Id*.

The bill provides that the act is effective upon becoming a law and that it expires on February 29, 2024.

## **B. SECTION DIRECTORY:**

Section 1 Directs the FTE to establish a specified toll relief program and provides an appropriation.

Section 2 Provides that the bill takes effect upon becoming a law.

#### II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

## A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

See fiscal comments.

## B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

See fiscal comments.

2. Expenditures:

None.

# C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

Applicable customers meeting the eligibility requirements and parameters established for the toll relief program will see a 50 percent reduction in tolls during the 2023 calendar year.

## D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

The bill appropriates, for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the nonrecurring sum of \$500 million from the General Revenue Fund to the State Transportation Trust Fund for the purpose of reimbursing the DOT. the FTE, and other Florida toll facilities or Florida toll facility entities for account credits issued for promotional purposes authorized in s. 338.161(1), F.S., and under the toll relief program created by the bill. The DOT must provide reimbursements to support compliance with covenants made with bondholders.

At the end of the month following each quarter, the department must reconcile all disbursements and transfers for reimbursement, and transfer to the General Revenue Fund all interest earnings from the appropriated funds.

The Legislature has appropriated \$500 million and DOT projections indicate a total program cost will not exceed \$458.7 million.48

#### III. COMMENTS

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Email received from Cody Farrill, Executive Office of the Governor Legislative & Intergovernmental Affairs, on December 9, 2022, on file with the House Appropriations Committee. Projections provided by Florida Turnpike Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer Nicola Liquori.

# A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. This bill does not appear to require counties or municipalities to spend funds or to take action requiring the expenditure of funds; reduce the authority that counties or municipalities have to raise revenues in the aggregate, or reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None.

## B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The bill does not expressly provide rulemaking authority. However, existing law provides that the DOT may adopt rules relating to the payment, collection, and enforcement of tolls, as authorized in ch. 338, F.S.49

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

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